EGYPT PROMISES NEW AIR TERMINAL FOR RUSSIAN TOURISTS

News / Airports / Routes



The Egyptian side is ready to provide to Russians a separate terminal at Cairo International Airport, if the influx of tourists from Russia reaches significant levels, press attache of the Egyptian Embassy to Russia Ayman Mousa said on the Rossiya 24 TV channel on Friday.

"Egypt will soon open a new terminal," he said. "Experts from Russia and the whole world have highly assessed it. The minister of civil aviation said that we will receive your (Russian) aircraft at the terminal, and do not mind to discuss the terminal's use when the number of tourists from Russia reaches a certain level. This level has not been defined yet, as it's the subject of discussion between the two countries", said the embassy official.

Earlier, Russian Transport Minister Maxim Sokolov also spoke about the prospects of opening a new terminal for Russian tourists, noting that "it all depends on the Egyptian colleagues." He said that the conclusion of Russian specialists on the new terminal's security could provide the basis for decision making by the Russian leadership.

Sokolov said on Tuesday that Russia's Transport Ministry may raise before the country's leadership the issue of phased opening of a number of Egyptian airports, and Cairo airport may be

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the first. "Theoretically, the issue may be raised before the country's leadership concerning the phased opening of a number of airports of Egypt for organizing regular and charter flights. Generally speaking, Cairo airport may be the first in this sense," the minister said.

According to him, a second terminal for servicing Russian tourists may be opened in that airport. "This terminal meets all the ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) requirements in the sphere of transport security. However, everything here depends on the Egyptian colleagues: when they inform us of the terminal opening, when our group comes there for auditing and making a conclusion. And it (conclusion) may be taken as a basis for making a decision by the Russian leadership," Sokolov added. The minister said previously that Russia's delegation may pay a visit to Egypt in late August - early September.

Negotiations on resuming air service with Egypt have been underway since late 2015. At the moment, Egypt's airports still fail to meet the Russian security requirements.

Air service with Egypt was suspended by Russia in November 2015 after a terrorist act on board an A321 plane of Russia's air carrier Kogalymavia that was en route from Sharm el-Sheikh in Egypt to St. Petersburg in Russia. The passenger airliner crashed over the Sinai Peninsula early on October 31. All 224 people onboard, including 217 passengers and the seven-member crew, were killed. This crash was the worst in the history of Russia's aviation.

After that crash Russia suspended all flights to Egypt. On November 17, at a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Director of the Federal Security Service (FSB) Alexander Bortnikov said that the crash had been caused by a terrorist act. In November 2015, it was announced that the crash had been caused by an act of terror committed by means of a home-made explosive device with a yield of up to one kilogram of TNT. The Russian transport minister said that air service will resume after Egypt fully ensures security at airports. Russia's key requirements for resuming flights to Egypt are the issues of using an automated biometric control access system and multi-level luggage control at Egyptian airports, and problems of in-flight meals control and video surveillance along airports' perimeter. As a result of the air service suspension the Egyptian tourism industry has suffered huge losses, as the influx of tourists has declined twofold, mainly due to the absence of Russians.

On Monday, Egyptian Civil Aviation Minister Sherif Fathy told a news conference in Cairo that Egypt and Russia had agreed on a roadmap for the resumption of air service between the two countries. According to him, the plan "envisages visits of several delegations of Russian experts who will inspect tourist facilities, including resort hotels, as well as will get acquainted with the latest security measures at Egyptian airports and the recent data of the commission" investigating the causes of the A321 passenger plane crash in Sinai in October 2015.

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